

Message Text

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13

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3682

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 2252

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, GY, US

SUBJECT: MINIMAL OFFICIAL GOG AND LOCAL MEDIA REACTION TO ELECTION

REF: (A) GEORGETOWN 2173, (B) GEORGETOWN 2210

SUMMARY: PRIOR TO ELECTION NOVEMBER 2, GOG-CONTROLLED PRESS CARRIED STANDARD WIRE SERVICE REPORTS ON PROGRESS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN. SUBSEQUENT TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S ELECTION, THE PRESS HAS CONTINUED THIS TYPE OF COVERAGE, BUT EDITORIAL COMMENT AND OFFICIAL REACTION FROM THE GOG HAVE BEEN MINIMAL. END SUMMARY.

1. THE "CHRONICLE" ON NOVEMBER 4 FEATURED A REUTER-CANA STORY ON CARTER'S VICTORY WHICH STATED THAT THE BASIS OF CARTER'S FOREIGN POLICY WOULD BE THE U.S. RELATIONSHIP WITH NATO AND JAPAN (REFTELS). ANOTHER LONG REUTER-CANA ARTICLE REVEALED THAT WORLD OPINION DID NOT EXPECT ANY SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AS A RESULT OF THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT CARTER. IN THAT SAME EDITION, THE FRONT PAGE CARRIED A BRIEF STATEMENT BY FONMIN WILLIS SAYING THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT THE GOALS OF U.S. POLICY TO CHANGE.

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2. IN A RADIO BROADCAST ON NOVEMBER 6, THE

"CHRONICLE'S" CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT HAMALUDIN SAID THAT HE DID NOT EXPECT A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AS A RESULT OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S VICTORY. IN HIS ANALYSIS OF THE ELECTION, HAMALUDIN ADMITTED THAT RECENT EVENTS MIGHT HAVE LED THE USG TO PERCEIVE GUYANA AS ANTI-U.S., BUT HE EMPHASIZED THAT THERE WERE MANY ASPECTS OF U.S. SOCIETY THAT THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES ADMIRER. HE STRESSED THAT GUYANA ONLY WANTS TO PURSUE AN INDEPENDENT POLICY AND ADDED THAT IF MAJOR POWERS CAN CO-EXIST, THEN IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR SMALL AND LARGE NATIONS TO MAINTAIN FRIENDLY RELATIONS. HAMALUDIN CONCLUDED THAT IF PRESIDENT CARTER HAS DOUBTS ABOUT THE CARIBBEAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE U.S., THEN HE COULD SEND A FACT-FINDING MISSION TO THE AREA FOR A FIRST-HAND LOOK. HAMALUDIN'S REMARKS WERE UNDOUBTEDLY CLEARED WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND REFLECT THE GOG POSITION.

3. THE "CHRONICLE" ON NOVEMBER 8 CARRIED A NOTICE SAYING ONLY THAT THE PM HAD SENT A MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS TO PRESIDENT CARTER. AT THE SOVIET NATIONAL DAY PARTY ON THE 7TH, FONMIN WILLIS EXPRESSED INTEREST IN THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION IN CONVERSATION WITH CHARGE AND COMMENTED THAT GOG WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO AWAIT INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT CARTER TO SEE A CHANGE IN U.S.-GUYANA RELATIONS AND TO RESOLVE PRESENT IMPASSE.

4. THE PPP-CONTROLLED "MIRROR" CARRIED SEVERAL ARTICLES ON THE CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION. ONE ARTICLE POINTED OUT THAT QUOTE ONE OF THE MAIN PLANKS OF CARTER'S BANDWAGON WAS ANTI-COMMUNISM UNQUOTE. AN EDITORIAL OF THE 4TH MAINTAINED THAT CARTER'S ELECTION REFLECTED AMERICANS' DESIRE FOR CHANGE BUT STATED THAT THERE IS NOT ANY REAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC PARTIES ON BASIC ISSUES.

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5. COMMENT: WHILE OFFICIAL GOG REACTION TO THE ELECTION HAS BEEN MUTED, UNOFFICIALLY SPECULATION IS RIFE IN GEORGETOWN WHETHER CHANGE IN ADMINISTRATION WILL PORTEND A FAVORABLE IMPACT ON U.S.-GOG RELATIONS. IT WAS EARLIER REPORTED IN PRESS AND RADIO THAT BURNHAM WAS THE ONLY LEADER FROM CARIBBEAN THAT WAS NOT RECEIVED IN WHITE HOUSE DURING NIXON-FORD ADMINISTRATIONS

(1968-76) AND POINTEDLY MENTIONED BURNHAM WAS
RECEIVED BY PRESIDENT JOHNSON INFERRING DEMO-
CRATIC ADMINISTRATIONS MORE FRIENDLY TO GUYANA.
WE HAVE ALSO HEARD UNCONFIRMED REPORTS THAT
BURNHAM HAS WRITTEN TWO LETTERS TO PRESIDENT-ELECT
CARTER, ONE AS EARLY AS OCTOBER 11.
MCCOY

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